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a pair of mounting locations integrally formed with the support member and being disposed on opposing sides of the lower portion thereof for mounting the highback to the gliding board component, the mounting locations being comprised of a second material that is different from the first material and has a second stiffness that is different from the first stiffness;

wherein the first stiffness is greater than the second stiffness, the lower portion includes a heel cup configured to hold a heel portion of a boot, the heel cup being comprised substantially of the second material, and wherein the support member includes an upper margin along the upper end of the upper portion thereof comprised of a material that is different from the first material and has a stiffness that is less than the first stiffness.

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~~9.~~ (Amended) The highback according to claim 1, wherein the support member further includes opposing side margins along the upper portion thereof comprised of a material that is different from the first material.

~~10.~~ (Amended) A highback for use with a gliding board component that interfaces with a rider's leg and is supportable by a gliding board, the highback comprising:

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an upright support member constructed and arranged to be contacted by and to support a rear portion of the rider's leg, the support member including a lower portion and an upper portion, the support member being comprised of at least a first material having a first stiffness extending continuously from an upper end of the upper portion to at least a lower end of the upper portion;

a pair of mounting locations integrally formed with the support member and being disposed on opposing sides of the lower portion thereof for mounting the highback to the gliding board component, the mounting locations being comprised of a second material that is different from the first material and has a second stiffness that is different from the first stiffness, wherein the first stiffness is greater than the second stiffness; and

a forward lean actuator mount that is constructed and arranged to support a forward lean actuator thereon, the forward lean actuator mount being disposed on the first material at the lower end of the upper portion.

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16. (Amended) A highback for use with a gliding board component that interfaces with a rider's leg and is supportable by a gliding board, the highback comprising:

an upright support member constructed and arranged to be contacted by and to support a rear portion of the rider's leg, the support member including a lower portion and an upper portion, the support member being comprised of at least a first material having a first stiffness extending continuously from an upper end of the upper portion to at least a lower end of the upper portion; and

AK a pair of mounting locations integrally formed with the support member and being disposed on opposing sides of the lower portion thereof for mounting the highback to the gliding board component, the mounting locations being comprised of a second material that is different from the first material and has a second stiffness that is different from the first stiffness;

wherein the first material forms a cassette that is supported on the support member, wherein the cassette includes a body portion and a peripheral flange extending from the body portion, the flange being attached to the support member to connect the cassette thereto, and wherein the support member is molded to the flange.

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18. (Amended) A highback for use with a gliding board component that interfaces with a rider's leg and is supportable by a gliding board, the highback comprising:

an upright support member constructed and arranged to be contacted by and to support a rear portion of the rider's leg, the support member including a lower portion and an upper portion, the support member being comprised of at least a first material having a first stiffness extending continuously from an upper end of the upper portion to at least a lower end of the upper portion; and

AK a pair of mounting locations integrally formed with the support member and being disposed on opposing sides of the lower portion thereof for mounting the highback to the gliding board component, the mounting locations being comprised of a second material that is different from the first material and has a second stiffness that is different from the first stiffness, wherein the first material is a composite and the second material is a plastic material that is molded to the composite.

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21. (Amended) A highback for use with a gliding board component that interfaces with a rider's leg and is supportable by a gliding board, the highback comprising:

an upright support member including an upper portion and a heel cup integrally formed with the upper portion, the upper portion being constructed and arranged to be contacted by and to support a rear portion of the rider's leg, the heel cup being configured to hold a heel portion of a boot, the upper portion being comprised of a first material and the heel cup being comprised substantially of a second material that is different from the first material, the first material having a first stiffness and the second material having a second stiffness that is less than the first stiffness;

wherein the support member includes an upper margin along the upper end of the upper portion thereof comprised of a material that is different from the first material and has a stiffness that is less than the first stiffness.

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29. (Amended) The highback according to claim ²⁴27, wherein the support member further includes opposing side margins along the upper portion thereof comprised of a material that is different from the first material.

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34. (Amended) A highback for use with a gliding board component that interfaces with a rider's leg and is supportable by a gliding board, the highback comprising:

an upright support member including an upper portion and a heel cup integrally formed with the upper portion, the upper portion being constructed and arranged to be contacted by and to support a rear portion of the rider's leg, the heel cup being configured to hold a heel portion of a boot, the upper portion being comprised of a first material and the heel cup being comprised substantially of a second material that is different from the first material, the first material having a first stiffness and the second material having a second stiffness that is less than the first stiffness; and

a forward lean actuator mount that is constructed and arranged to support a forward lean actuator thereon, the forward lean actuator mount being disposed on the first material at the lower end of the upper portion.

44/40. (Amended) A highback for use with a gliding board component that interfaces with a rider's leg and is supportable by a gliding board, the highback comprising:

an upright support member including an upper portion and a heel cup integrally formed with the upper portion, the upper portion being constructed and arranged to be contacted by and to support a rear portion of the rider's leg, the heel cup being configured to hold a heel portion of a boot, the upper portion being comprised of a first material and the heel cup being comprised substantially of a second material that is different from the first material, the first material having a first stiffness and the second material having a second stiffness that is less than the first stiffness;

wherein the first material forms a cassette that is supported on the support member, wherein the cassette includes a body portion and a peripheral flange extending from the body portion, the flange being attached to the support member to connect the cassette thereto, and wherein the support member is molded to the flange.

44/42. (Amended) A highback for use with a gliding board component that interfaces with a rider's leg and is supportable by a gliding board, the highback comprising:

an upright support member including an upper portion and a heel cup integrally formed with the upper portion, the upper portion being constructed and arranged to be contacted by and to support a rear portion of the rider's leg, the heel cup being configured to hold a heel portion of a boot, the upper portion being comprised of a first material and the heel cup being comprised substantially of a second material that is different from the first material, the first material having a first stiffness and the second material having a second stiffness that is less than the first stiffness, wherein the first material is a composite and the second material is a plastic material that is molded to the composite.

44/51. (Amended) A snowboard binding for securing a snowboard boot to a snowboard, the snowboard binding comprising:

a baseplate that is mountable to the snowboard;
a heel hoop disposed at a heel end of the baseplate; and

a highback pivotally supported by the baseplate adjacent the heel hoop, the highback being constructed and arranged to be contacted by and to support a rear portion of a rider's leg, the highback including:

an upper region that cooperates with the heel hoop to transmit forces between the rider's leg and the snowboard, the upper region being comprised of a first material having a first stiffness; and

a lower region integrally formed with the upper region, the lower region being pivotally mounted to the baseplate, the lower region being comprised of a second material that is different from the first material and having a second stiffness that is less than the first stiffness;

wherein the upper region includes an upper margin along the upper end thereof comprised of a material that is different from the first material and has a stiffness that is less than the first stiffness.

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38. (Amended) The snowboard binding according to claim 31, wherein the upper region further includes opposing side margins comprised of a material that is different from the first material.

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32. (Amended) A snowboard binding for securing a snowboard boot to a snowboard, the snowboard binding comprising:

a baseplate that is mountable to the snowboard;

a heel hoop disposed at a heel end of the baseplate; and

a highback pivotally supported by the baseplate adjacent the heel hoop, the highback being constructed and arranged to be contacted by and to support a rear portion of a rider's leg, the highback including:

an upper region that cooperates with the heel hoop to transmit forces between the rider's leg and the snowboard, the upper region being comprised of a first material having a first stiffness;

a lower region integrally formed with the upper region, the lower region being pivotally mounted to the baseplate, the lower region being comprised of a second